

What is claimed is:

1. An electrical receptacle for receiving conductive male prongs of an external plug comprising
a housing having a plurality of prong receiving openings,
terminal means mounted within said housing,
said terminal means including a plurality of electrical contact elements for
creating an electrical connection with a respective prong inserted into said plurality of
openings, and
said plurality of electrical contacts being positioned within said housing to
establish electrical with a male plug when a respective prong is substantially fully
inserted into said housing and to prevent an electrical connection to be established when a
respective prong is only partially inserted into said housing.
2. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 1 wherein said plurality of openings
include at least one pair of spaced openings for receiving the spaced prongs of a
respective male plug.
3. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 2 wherein said plurality of electrical
contacts each include a pair of spaced conductive elements for contacting a respective
prong.

4. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 3 wherein said electrical contacts generally have a U-shaped configuration for forming said pair of spaced conductive elements.
5. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 1 wherein said terminal means includes a plurality of terminal members, said plurality of electrical contacts being positioned on said plurality of terminal members.
6. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 5 wherein said plurality of electrical contacts each include a pair of spaced contact elements, said spaced contact elements being respectively formed on said plurality of conductive members.
7. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 6 wherein at least one of said spaced contact elements of one of said plurality of conductive members is positioned adjacent to at least one of said spaced contact elements of another of said plurality of conductive members.
8. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 7 wherein said at least one of said spaced contact elements of one of said plurality of contact members is positioned to receive a prong of a single male plug, said at least one of said spaced contactive members is positioned to receive the other the single male plug.

9. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 5 wherein said plurality of electrical contacts are respectively formed on opposite end portions of each said plurality of conductive members.

10. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 1 further comprising locking means for releasably locking a prong of the male plug inserted into said electrical contact with a respective one of said plurality of electrical contacts.

11. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 10 wherein said locking means includes a locking element for engaging the prong of the male plug inserted for said electrical connection.

12. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 11 wherein said locking means includes an actuator for locking and releasing the male prong.

13. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 12 wherein the actuator includes an external portion extending through said housing, said external portion providing external access to lock and release the male prong.

14. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 13 wherein said locking means includes an open slot formed on said actuator for receiving said locking element, said open slot having a variable depth for locking and releasing said locking element from engagement with a male prong.

15. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 14 wherein said actuator is moveable along an axis relative to said housing generally parallel to the insert prong.

16. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 15 wherein said slot includes a longitudinal axis extending parallel to said axis.

17. A locking electrical receptacle comprising
a housing having a plurality of openings for receiving the male prongs of an electrical plug inserted into said housing parallel to an axis,
locking means for releasably locking the male prongs of an electrical plug inserted into said plurality of openings,
actuator means coupled to said locking means for causing said locking means to releasably lock an inserted prong, and
said actuator means being movable relative to said housing along a second axis being parallel to said first axis.

18. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 17 wherein said locking means engages a male prong for locking the electrical plug inserted a respective one of said plurality of openings.

19. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 18 wherein said actuator means includes a slot for receiving said locking means, said locking means being moveable relative to said slot.
20. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 19 wherein said slot has a variable depth.
21. An electrical locking receptacle comprising
a housing for receiving the prongs of at least one electrical male plug,
locking means operatively mounted in said housing for alternatively locking and releasing a male plug received in said housing,
said locking means including a manually operated actuator element for alternatively locking and releasing the male plug, and
said actuator element having a cross-section with a predetermined dimension along a first axis and a second predetermined dimension along a second axis extending perpendicular to said first axis,
said first predetermined dimension being greater than said second predetermined axis.
22. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 21 wherein said cross section is oval in shape.

23. An electrical locking receptacle comprising
- a housing for receiving the prongs of at least one electrical male plug,
- locking means operatively mounted in said housing for alternatively locking and releasing a male plug received in said housing,
- said locking means including a manually operated actuator element for mounted for movement for alternatively locking and releasing the male plug,
- said locking means being a locking element,
- said actuator element having an open slot disposed adjacent an inserted prong for receiving said locking element, and
- said open slot having a variable depth for urging said locking element in one direction for locking in one position and allowing insertion and release of a prong in a second position.
24. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 23 wherein said locking element is a ball.
25. The electrical receptacle according to claim 23 wherein said locking element is moveable relative to said slot.
26. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 23 wherein said open slot has a first shallow depth for urging said locking element into the punch hole of an inserted prong for locking.

27. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 26 wherein said open slot has a second depth deeper than said first shallow depth for allowing movement of the locking element away from an insert prong.

28. The electrical receptacle according to Claim 27 wherein said actuator element is resiliently biased in one direction.